

How much will this cost the taxpayers?
Taxpayers will notice no change on their property tax bills due to this project.

This project began with the establishment of a development plan in a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district. Basically, bonds are sold to help pay for refurbishing and redeveloping the depressed area. A base property value within the TIF district was established at approximately \$5,000,000 at the time of its creation. The local taxing bodies will continue to receive the property tax dollars according to this base valuation. Property taxes from the additional property value resulting from the redevelopment would pay the bond principal and interest.

What can I expect to see in the next weeks, months and years?
Most of what you will see in the media over the next year will be reports on the property negotiations and acquisitions. Any concept plan under review will be brought to a series of public meetings, including the Plan Commission, Historic Preservation Commission, Planning and Development Committee, and various meetings of the Downtown St. Charles Partnership. Public input is encouraged along the way. Construction activity in this area should begin in approximately one to two years, if all goes as planned.

How can I keep informed on this project?
As the project progresses, we plan to post some brief updates in the City newsletter, *From the Den*. The City's web site (www.stcharlesil.gov) also contains weekly updates on this and other City projects on the City News page in the City Grapevine section. The City Grapevine weekly updates will include notices of public meetings at which the First Street Redevelopment Project will be discussed. The agendas for public meetings can be found on the Meetings page of the City's web site. The preliminary drawings are also available for public viewing at the St. Charles Public Library, 1 S. 6th Ave. and City Hall, 2 E. Main Street. Future drawings and plans will be available in both locations as the project progresses.

Anyone is welcome to contact the City Administrator's office (377-4422/ lmaholland@stcharlesil.gov), the Mayor's office (377-4444/ sklinkhamer@stcharlesil.gov) or the Downtown St. Charles Partnership office (513-5386/david@dtown.org) with comments, questions and concerns—we welcome your comments and are happy to share information.

Where can I get more information on this and other strategic planning projects?
The City's web site has a Strategic Planning page with links to all of the major planning projects and reports, including the Downtown St. Charles Strategy Plan, River Corridor Project, First Street Redevelopment Project, and Corridor Improvement Plan – www.stcharlesil.gov/planning/. These plans are also available for review at City Hall, 2 E. Main Street, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.



└Corner of Main and First Streets

East view of the First Street elevation.

Blue Goose┐

The City encourages citizens to stay informed, attend public meetings and participate in public forums (see contact information to the left). The following City staff members will be glad to address specific questions:

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First Street Redevelopment Plan Scope, Plan and Information

The scope and impact of the First Street Redevelopment Project will go far beyond any other project in the history of St. Charles.

It is rare that we have the opportunity to affect the future of the community in such a significant way. The same feeling may have been felt when the Hotel Baker and the Municipal Building were built. First Street differs significantly, however, because the assemblage of property for a comprehensive redevelopment is far beyond the scope of any previous project. Each parcel is an important piece of a large puzzle.

First Street is an opportunity to create a unified development area where traffic can be controlled, parking will be plentiful, businesses will be grouped and mixed to support each other (unique shops, restaurants, offices and residences) and the environment itself will be landscaped and geared toward a pedestrian friendly, extraordinarily pleasant and attractive shopping/dining area. It is an outgrowth of the Downtown Strategy Plan completed in 2000; the River Corridor Master Plan completed in 2002, and design guidelines created by a citizens committee in 2002.

Although individual development may occur in pieces throughout this area over a number of years, a unified and coordinated project will ensure the development of plaza and public areas, coordination of businesses that will benefit each other, and an environment conducive to a downtown, pedestrian district from which the whole community will benefit. Without a comprehensive approach to this redevelopment effort, the project will have little impact on the remainder of the downtown.

Highlights of the First Street Plan:

- An expansive public plaza area (approximately one-half acre) will be located behind the Main Street buildings and extend all the way to the river.
- A 580 car public parking garage will be constructed.
- Retail, office and residential uses will total 270,000 square feet.
- The riverfront will be open to pedestrian traffic from Main Street to the Blue Goose property.
- The streetscape will be greatly improved.
- First Street right-of-way will be widened for diagonal, on-street parking.
- An arched pedestrian walkway over First Street will create a gateway and link the buildings on the east side of First Street to the parking deck.
- The project integrates new architecture that honors the past while reflecting St. Charles as a progressive and vibrant community.



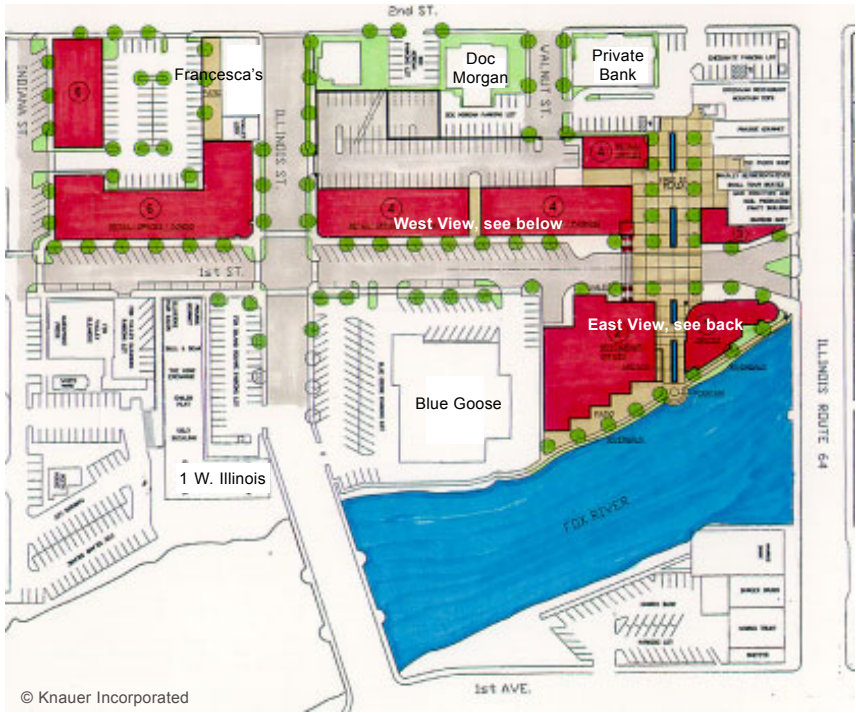
First Street rendering, looking south from Main Street.

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Phase 1 of this project will end at Indiana Street (north of Frontier Dodge). Additional phases will extend the redevelopment to Rte. 31.

We have received many questions about the First Street Redevelopment Plan.



What does this project offer the City?
A redeveloped First Street offers new retail space, downtown residents and workers, aesthetic public improvements at the river's edge, expansion of a riverwalk, public plaza area and promotion of investment in the entire downtown. A revitalization of First Street will create a ripple effect for redevelopment in the downtown area as a whole, as well as the entire community.

Is there a master plan?
The City has considered several plans for First Street, beginning with the November 2000 *Strategy Plan*. The first concept plan was generated in October 2001. *Design Guidelines* were completed, with community input, in July 2002. A concept plan by Davis Street Land Company was chosen by the City Council in December 2002. The current concept plan was presented to the Planning & Development Committee on September 13, 2004. All of these plans are guided by the concepts in the *Strategy Plan* and *Design Guidelines*. These documents have served as the City's overall plan throughout this project.

How will this be different from a regional mall?
Regional shopping districts do not enjoy the beauty found along the Fox River. It is envisioned that the First Street shopping district will be a location where people will

live, shop, dine, visit with friends, and enjoy the river. Phase I of the project is expected to have 59,000 square feet of residential space, 82,000 square feet of retail space, and 129,000 square feet of office space. The retail component would focus on local merchants, possibly mixed with some national retailers.

What will happen to The Manor, ZaZa's and Vi's?
The City would like to see existing businesses thrive in new locations that support their success in downtown and has worked with the developer to make sure the development plan offers the opportunity for The Manor, ZaZa's and Vi's to relocate, should they wish. An attractive gateway to the First Street area, convenient public access to the riverfront and parking areas, a public plaza, and right-of-way improvements will also be an important factor in attracting visitors and implementing the River Corridor Master Plan. These objectives will not be realized without the relocation of these three businesses. The City maintains the position that eminent domain is a last resort to negotiation.

Will these buildings have to be torn down?
The buildings currently occupied by the Manor, ZaZa Trattoria and Vi's were designated as "non-contributing" to the historic significance of the downtown district, as determined by the Historic Preservation Commission when the district was created in 1994. The First Street Redevelopment and River Corridor Projects cannot move forward without public riverfront access, park areas for the public, street widening and right-of-way improvements in this very important and visible area.

Why don't we just let development happen naturally?
Investment in this area has not kept pace with investment in the rest of St. Charles. Except for investment by the Blue Goose, Francesca's, the Brownstones and Main Street buildings, almost all other recent investment in this area had been public dollars through the City's Façade Improvement Program. When a once-vital retail area deteriorates, other retail areas are affected because of reduced pedestrian shopping traffic. A deteriorated downtown affects a community's image, thereby also affecting the entire community's property values. Sales tax dollars decrease, placing more of a burden on taxpayers to make up the difference to pay for the same level of municipal services. Visitor-based businesses (hotels, restaurants) are also greatly affected. It would be irresponsible for the City to ignore the problems and not take action to facilitate a positive change.

What kind of residential housing is planned?
New residents are an important component of any downtown redevelopment project to help support businesses and create energy through a more populated environment. We hope to achieve a mixed use project that will include condos and apartments of different sizes and price ranges. This will attract residents of all ages, from young adults to senior citizens.

The First Street Redevelopment Proposal, Phase I, was prepared by:

Development Group:
First Street Development LLC
409 Illinois Ave.,
Ste. 1D
St. Charles, IL 60174

Architect:
Knauer Incorporated
720 N. Waukegan Rd.
Deerfield, IL 60015



↑Corner of First and Illinois Streets

West view of the First Street elevation.

Corner of First and Main Streets ↑